

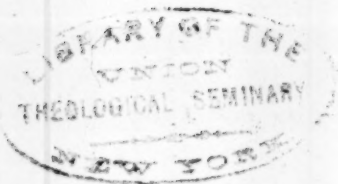
THE
LETTER
FOR
TOLERATION
DECIPHER'D,
AND THE
ABSURDITY and IMPIETY
OF AN
Absolute Toleration
DEMONSTRATED,

BY THE
Judgment of Presbyterians, Independents,
AND BY
M^r Calvin, M^r Baxter, and the Parliament, 1662.

Thomas Long

Licensed and Entred according to Order.

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TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Sir John Holt, Kt.
Lord Chief Justice of England,
And One of
Their Majesties Most Honourable Privy-Council.

T*He favourable Opinion which Your Lordship entertain'd of the Author's Endeavours, to Assert the Government established in the State, bath drawn on Your Lordship the trouble of this Confident Address, in behalf of the Church, both which were with equal Violence Assaulted; the one by an All-Dispensing Power, the other by an Absolute Liberty, each of which, like an Indian Hurricane, had well nigh hurried all into Confusion: And there are still a sort of Lapland Sorcerers, that would give Vent to the like Winds to encrease our Storms, wherefore, as when a breach is made in the Banks of a Nation, by impetuous and mighty Waves, all hands are at work to Repair the Breach, and give check to the invading Waters; and the Labours of many Hands would be in vain, without the Heads of experienced and able Persons to direct and encourage them; so would the Endeavours of obscure Persons be ineffectual, if not influenced and authoriz'd by such as are invested with Power, and endued with Parts to exert their Endeavours for the Preservation of the True Religion and Loyalty: Na-*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ture teacheth those Creatures that are weak, to seek their Quiet and Safety among the unaccessible Rocks, and to build their Nests, for the Security of themselves and their Off-spring, on the tallest Cedars. And we see how the Sun that attracts only Vapors from the Earth, and such as obscure its face, doth by the warm influence of its Rays quickly purify them, and return them in wholesome Showers, which makes the Earth fruitful for the common Good. The sence of my Weakness is the best Apology I can make for taking Sanctuary in so sure a Name, which is an Open and Strong Holt, and from a Person that acts vigorously in so high an Orb, the weakest Instrument may hope to be acted for the Publick Welfare.

The Design of this small Tract (may it please Your Lordship) is to Countermine that Absolute and Uncontrolable Liberty in Religious Worship, which they that contend for it now, have formerly baffled and condemned, and for which the Author of a late Letter for Liberty, hath prepared his Mine, and like another Faux, with his Dark Lanthorn, is ready to blow up the Religion and Loyalty, by G O D's Blessing, now Establiished, into meer Air and Atheism: And, besides the Mischief of the Design, nothing could Apologize for the Presumption of this slender Dedication, but Your sincere Espousing of that Great Cause, and Animating such as appears for it, which hath given me the Confidence to Subscribe myself

Your Honour's Most Humbly

Devoted Servant,

THO. LONG.

T H E
Letter for Toleration
 DECYPHER ' D.

THough the Learned Reader needs no *Clavis* to let him in to the understanding of the sense of this Author, yet because of the great diversity of Judgments that is among us, I shall take the method that is usual, in decyphering such Writings of Designing Men (who seek to conceal their Intelligence by obscure Characters) are wont to contrive (*i. e.*) first to find out the Vowels, which give a sound to the other Characters, which are Consonants, and may with much ease be discerned; that is, I shall first lay open the absurd Principles of the Author in this Letter, and leave it to the Readers Judgments what the Consequences and Superstructure do import.

1. Then he lays down this Position in his Epistle to the Reader, *That just and true Liberty, equal and impartial Liberty, is an absolute Liberty, (viz.) quid libet audendi, as well as credendi, a Liberty not only to believe what every man pleaseth, but publicly to profess it, and that against the Laws of the Magistrate who if he endeavors to coerce and restrain such a lawless Liberty, he thinks it lawful to resist force by force.* This certainly is a Jesuitical Plot, for they finding their design of an Absolute Power to be baffled, have invented this Stratagem of an Absolute Liberty to put a new life into their dying Cause; for they knowing what a multitude of *Libertines* abound among us, endeavour to persuade them, that their Liberty is their birth right, *page 48.* and whereof whoever seeks to deprive them, would rob them of that liberty whereby Christ hath made them free, wherefore in *page 1.* he tells them, that this absolute Toleration is the chief Characteristical

mark of the true Church, which in truth would unchurch all Christian Societies, that have been since the first assembling of them by Christ and his Apostles, for the first Assembly that had the name of a Church given them, is thus described, *Acts 2. 42, &c. They that gladly received the word were Baptized, and continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers, and verse 44. All that believed were together, and continued daily in the Temple with one accord praising God, and having favour with all men, and the Lord added to the Church such as should be saved.* Over this Church at Jerusalem St. James and the Elders with him, had the presidency and power to make Decrees for deciding such differences as might arise between the several Members thereof, and to preserve them in Unity of Doctrine and Worship, and to prescribe or forbid the use of things in their own nature indifferent, and if any Error or Schism did arise, to pervert their Faith, or disturb their Unity; you may see in every Epistle, how industrious the Apostles were by the use of their Power and Authority to suppress them; and our Saviour commends the Church of *Ephesus*, *Rev. 2. 6.* for hating the works of the *Nicolaitans*: Nor would St. John tarry in the Company of *Corinthes* the Heretick, when by chance he met him at a Bath, after St. John, *Polycarp* and *Ignatius* two Primitive Bishops, exhorted all *Christians* not to do any thing without the Bishop, but to live in communion with him as with Christ whose Minister he was.

And when the Doctrine of the con-substantiality of the Son with the Father was denied (as it was very anciently) with what Zeal did the Orthodox Fathers oppose the first broachers of it, as also did St. *Augustine* and the Bishops in his time oppose the *Donatists*, who set up distinct Assemblies, though they retained the same Doctrine and Discipline by Bishops, the same Sacraments and Ordinances, *hoc solo nomine*, because they divided themselves and made a breach in the Unity of the Church; so that this Absolute Toleration of Men of all persuasions, is so far from being a Characteristick of the Church of Christ, that it is rather the Character of an Antichrist; so that all that he says on this Topick, till he comes to *page 6.* is but the multiplying of many absurdities from that one, *That his absolute Toleration is the Characteristick mark of the Church.*

His second Position page 6. is like the first, viz. *That the whole Jurisdiction of the Magistrate reacheth only to civil concerns, and that it neither can, nor ought in any manner to be extended to the Salvation of Souls*; on which he discourseth to page 9. which is a flat contradiction to that of the Apostle, *Rom. 13. Commanding every Soul Jew or Gentile, to submit to the Higher Power as to Gods Ordinance, which he hath instituted for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well, that under them we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all Godliness and Honesty.* And Constantine the first Christian Emperour, challenged of right to himself, that he was a Bishop to order the External Rites and Administrations of the Church in matters of Unity and Decency, and this was the great error of the *Donatists*, which led them into such confusion; *Quid imperatoribus cum Ecclesia?* What hath the Emperour to do with the Church? When the SS foretold Kings should be their nursing Fathers.

3. Page 9. He gives us a description of such a lawless Church, (viz.) *A voluntary Society of Men, joyning themselves together of their own accord, in order to the publick Worship of God, in such a manner as they judge acceptable to him, and effectual to the Salvation of their Souls*; So that the Subject of this Church, may be *Turks or Jews* (for he names not Christians) much lets the Scriptures and Sacraments, left of all any Bishops or Pastors, nor any Rule or Laws to guide them, but to Worship God as they think to be acceptable to him, not such as God hath prescribed, but such as Christ hath declared to be vain, a Will-worship after their own Inventions, *Teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of Men*, Mat. 15. 9. And thus we have an Absolute Church too, as well as Absolute Toleration, and for ought I know every Member may be made a Church, as Mrs. *Hutchinson* in *New-England* disliking all the Congregations, declared her self alone to be the Spouse and Church of Christ.

As to his other wild freaks and excursions, the mention of them is a sufficient Confutation. As when he asks, page 29. *Will any one say, that a Magistrate hath right to Ordain by Law, that all Children shall be Baptized by Priests in the Sacred Font*, page 33. *That if a People Congregated upon account of Religion, should be desirous to Sacrifice a Calf, they ought not to be prohibited by Law*, whereby he would make the Magistrates such as *Jeroboam*, that set up Calves to make *Israel* to sin. *Sed vitula in dignus.* And page 36. where

he pleads, that such an Idolatry as is confessed to be a Sin, is not to be punished by the Magistrate. *Page 32. That the Magistrate hath no power to impose by his Laws, the use of any Rites or Ceremonies in any Church, nor to forbid the use of any such as are already received and practised by any Church* (Suppose Quakers or Adamites) *And page 33. That whatsoever is permitted by the Magistrate to any of his Subjects for ordinary use, neither can nor ought to be forbidden by him to any Sect of People, for their Religious uses, as to speak Latine in the Church. p. 52, and p. 37.* That there is absolutely no such thing under the Gospel, as a Christian Common-wealth. *page 40.* That the Magistrate ought not to forbid the Preaching or Professing of any Speculative Opinions in any Church. *pag. 47.* That they are not to be Tolerated by the Magistrate, that will not own and teach the Duty of Tolerating all men in matters of meer Religion. *page 52, 53.* That whatever things are left free by Law in the common occasions of Life, ought to remain so to every Church in Divine Worship. *And page 53.* If in solemn Assemblies Observation of Festivals in Publick Worship be permitted to any one sort of Professors, the same ought to be permitted to *Presbyterians, Independants, Anabaptists, Arminians, Quakers* and others, and so some may fast while others feast, &c. with the same liberty. *page 54.* That neither *Pagan, Mahometan* nor *Jew*, ought to be excluded from the Civil Rights of the Common-wealth, we may allow them Synagogues as well as Houses. *page 55.* That it is the refusals of Toleration to those that are of different Opinions, that hath produced all the Bustles and Wars that have been in the Christian World, as if the means to extinguish a fire that is got into a House, were to let it alone till it got up into the Roof.

I know not to what to compare the Author of this Letter, but to one of those Locusts that arose out of the smoke of the bottomless Pit, *Rev. 9. 3.* whose smoke darkened the Air and the Sun, and though they had the face of a Man, yet were they more like to Horses prepared for Battle, or Scorpions that had power to sting Men, it is no wonder, that this Author doth intersperse his discourse with the recommendation of Love and Unity, and Declaration against Scandalous Vices of Whoredom, &c. (the Devil himself could not deceive such multitudes, if he did not appear as an Angel of Light) these are but baits to cover the hook, and invite the Licentious Readers to swallow it the more greedily. It

is a greater wonder, that any Person of common Apprehension should not discern the impostures, and that the Author must be such a Person as could not believe, what he would persuade others to imbrace and practice, but the whole designe of his Letter is, to bring the whole Church and State to Confusion, by his absolute Toleration, which is intended to crumble us into innumerable and irreconcilable Sects, that so *Papery* may not only have a Toleration among us, but get Dominion over us: For even such Locusts have a King over them, whose name is *Abaddon* (i. e.) a Destroyer. For my part, I think it beneath any sober Person to condescend to a more particular confutation of the discourse, which is so palpably injurious to all Supreme Magistrates, as to deny them any power over the Church that is under them, and so destructive to all the Churches of Christ, however well established in *Christendom*: And therefore I shall recommend the Indifferent Reader to what the Doctors and Pastors of the Reformed Churches have Written in their several Confessions, and to what Mr. *Calvin* hath written on this Subject against the *Anabaptists* and other Sectaries, whose approbation of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England* appeares in a late Tract called *Calvinus Redivivus*, and especially to that elaborate Treatise of *Hugo Grotius*, de Imperio Summarum Potestatum circa Sacra, the Translation of which into our Language would be a full confutation of the Letter; and that there may not want such Arbitrators, as may influence the present Sectaries to a despising of his Opinions, I shall subjoyn the judgment of such *Presbyterians* and *Independants*, who though they agreed not among themselves, but as they had power denied Toleration to their dissenting Brethren, yet vehemently opposed such a Toleration as this Author would promote, which is so abominable, as it is able to affright such as have pleaded for a Toleration heretofore, and to make them endeavour to crush it in its Infancy, considering to what a Monster it is growing up. But as the late Kings insatuated Council precipitated their designs with so much Zeal, that they ruined the Cause which they sought to promote, so hath this extravagant Author said more to disparage a Toleration, then all those that desired it, can say to recommend it.

It is doubtless a great injustice, to allow that in our selves, which we condemn in others, and to account the same Things Vertues in some persons, which in others are condemned as Vices; which argues

1 argues a great partiality and corruption of Mind and Conscience,
 and that it is not the Cause of God for which Men are so zealously
 2 affected, but their own Concern and Interest ; which will evident-
 ly appear in the Doctrine and Practice of the most eminent Dis-
 3 senters, as soon as they had got any Power in their hands. I shall
 not instance in their dealing with the Divines of the Church of
 4 England, whose Government by Bishops they covenanted to ex-
 tirpate Root and Branch, but their behaviour towards each other,
 as they had power and opportunity ; and I shall relate only mat-
 ters of fact, and their own printed Opinions, to be yet seen in
 their Sermons, and other Tracts to this purpose. No sooner did
 some of their Brethren appear for the Independency of their Con-
 gregations, having cause enough to complain of that rigor which
 the Presbyterian Discipline would have subjected them unto, but
 5 Name of God, adjure the Long Parliament, by no means to grant
 them that (which they called intolerable) Toleration. Thus Dr.
Corn. Burgess, in a Sermon to the House of Commons, *Novemb. 9.*
1641, p. 60. Matters of Religion (*sic ut*) lay bleeding, all Go-
 vernment and Discipline is in the Grave, and all putridinous Ver-
 mine, of bold Schismatics, and frantick Sectaries, glory in her
 6 ashes, making her fall their own rising, to mount our Pulpits, to
 offer strange Fire to expel the ablest, gravest, and most eminent
 Ministers in the Kingdom ; if not out of their Pulpits, yet out of
 7 the hearts of the People, as a company of weak Men, Formalists,
 Time-Servers, no Ministers of Christ, but Limbs of Antichrist ;
 and yet no course is taken to suppress their fury, and to reduce
 8 them to Order ; I beseech you therefore in the Name of that great
 God whom you serve, and who hath blest you, to resume and
 9 pursue your first thoughts of setting up God and his Ordinances,
 that our Church, and the Government thereof, may be no longer
 laid waste, and exposed to Confusion, under the pretence of not
 forcing Mens Consciences. To put Men into Order and Uniform-
 10 mity in God's way, is not to force Mens Consciences, but to set
 God in his due place, and to bring his People into the path of
 Righteousness and Life. In another Sermon, *April 30. 1645. p. 52.*
 11 Is it Persecution, and Antichristianism to engage all to Unity and
 Uniformity : Doth Paul bid the *Philippians*, *ch. 3. 2.* To beware of
 the concision ; and beseech the *Romans*, *ch. 16. 17.* To mark them that
 cause divisions, because they serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own
 bellies,

bellies, &c. ; and wish they were even cut off that troubled the Galatians, ch. 5. 12. And is it such a heinous Offence now, for the faithful Servants of Christ to take the same course ? The ample commendation which God gives the pious Kings of Israel, for letting Religion in an uniform way, may sufficiently warrant all Religious Magistrates, to take care that all under their Government should serve the Lord with one shoulder, this being not tyranny over Men, but a privilege of the Gospel. — Settle this in your Hearts, God's Truth, the true Worship and Discipline of Christ in one uniform way, never prejudiced any Nation, but hath ever been the Safety, Happiness, and Honour ; ye, (Magistrates) in your Place, and we in our Function, should mind and promote the things of God ; ye by the Sword, and we by the Word—— And speaking of Gamaliel's Counsel, Acts 5. 39. he says, Though it be found in the Bible, yet it is not of like Authority as one of Solomon's Proverbs, it hath no otherwise the approbation of God, then the Design of Pharaoh, or the crafty Counsel of Achitophel, it will not consist with the Rules of the Word, and hath been condemned as unsound by many godly and wise Men ; ye have heard of the Fable of the Snake, and the Country-man, that brought it to the fire ; I need not apply it ; I pray God the Remedy be not deferred till it be too late—— Mr. William Reyners Sermon to the Commons, August 28. 1644. p. 12. speaking of Heresies and Sects, saith, We cannot preach and pray them down immediately ; well, that which the Word cannot do, the Sword shall ; that which the Water cannot wash out, the Fire will burn out ; as the Apostle applies that Text, Haggai 2. 6, 7. If this were necessary for the Abolition of that Divine Worship, the Ceremonial Ordinances, how much more shall that which hath been of humane Invention ; yea, the very Fumes and Fogs of the bottomless Pit, be tumbled down with Violence and Vengeance to Hell, from whence it came. Mr. Case's Sermon to the Commons, May 26. 1647. p. 33. &c. This only would I know of you, are Idolaters, Hereticks, Blasphemers, and Seducers, Evil-doers, or no ; if so, look to your charge, Rom. 13. 4. Rulers must be a terror to Evil-doers, unless ye mean to bear the Sword in vain ; and if you will not, if God take it into his hands, he will execute Vengeance thoroughly : Oh, therefore be doing ! for it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Had we a Parliament of Apostate Julians, who at once set open the Temples of the Heathenish

nish Gods, and Christian Churches, and granted to Orthodox and Heretick Liberty of Conscience, (as we call it) but *Aufine* more truly Liberty of Perdition; for that was his design: *Eo modo putans Christianum nomen posse perire de terris*: Or had we a Parliament of careless *Gallio's*, we should not wonder, but for a Parliament of Christians, Protestants, Professors, the choicest, the most active that could be cull'd out of a Christian State, that these things could be done, and you hold your peace, makes the Churches abroad to wonder what you are doing, and all at home that love the Lord Jesus Christ more than their own Interest and Notions, to be filled with unspeakable trembling and astonishment. Sermon before the Commons, *February 19. 1645. p. 25.* The Error and Innovations under which we so groaned in later times, were but *Tolerabiles ineptiæ*, tolerable Trifles, childrens play, compared with these damnable Doctrines, Doctrines of Devils; Polygamy, Arbitrary Divorce, Mortality of the Soul, no Ministry, no Churches, no Ordinances; yea, the Divinity of Christ and the Holy Ghost is questioned by some, and the Foundation of all this is laid in such a Schism of boundless Liberty of Conscience. Sermon before the Commons, *May 26. 1647. p. 25.* There is a Generation of Men that stand up for all kind of false Worship, that every Man may Worship God after his own Conscience, and if they may not, are ready not only to cry, but act Persecution, and that to purpose, for while they cry Persecution *Gladio Oris*, they are ready to act Persecution *Ore Gladii*. Dr. *Lightfoot's* Sermon, *Aug. 26. 1645. p. 30.* There is great pleading for Liberty of Conscience, for Men to do what seems good in their own eyes, and what followed you may read in the Book of *Judges*, I hold it a truer point in Divinity, that *Errans Conscientia liganda non ligat*: The Devil in the Conscience must be bound: It's true, Christ alone must reign in the Conscience; but it is as true that he doth so by the Power that he hath put into the hands of the Magistrate, as well as by his Word and Spirit. Mr. *Hugh's* Sermon, *May 26. 1647. p. 34.* I must say that, that the Toleration of all things must be a destructive principle to the State or Church, where ever it be; if he that sets one House on fire, deserves hanging, much more they that set a whole Kingdom on fire; if he that murders one Man, much more he that murders Three Kingdoms, these are of a Jesuitical spirit, and no doubt the heads and hands of the Jesuits are in all our Divisions. You Magistrates are *Custodes & vindices*

vindices utriusq; Tabula: Some would blot out half your Commission, and restrain this Good or Evil to Civil Good and Evil; but *Ubi lex non distinguit*, there must not we.

Tell me, I beseech you, shall it be lawful for Magistrates to punish Men, for withdrawing Men from Obedience to the Laws of the Land, and not if from the Laws of God, those that destroy Mens Bodies, and not Mens Souls; shall Christian Magistrates say as *Tiberius*, *Deorum injuria diis cura*: Doth not God prophesie that in the New Testament Kings shall be Nursing Fathers.

Object. Will you allow the Magistrates to tyrannize over Mens Consciences.

Ans. By no means; but I believe it is the Duty of Magistrates to keep Men from infecting the Souls of their Subjects with destroying Errors, if he may lawfully shut up a Man that hath the Plague on his Body, why not him that hath the Plague of Heresie on his Soul. And in Sermon, *Octob. 22. 1644. p. 26.* This is a certain Rule, That all the sins of the Kingdom, committed by your Allowance, are your Sins, and call for your Repentance; yours are the Errors and Heresies; you are the Anabaptists, the Antimonians; it's you that hold all Religions are to be tolerated, Law and Providence are quite changed, if Toleration of false Worship, and other Abuses of Religion tend not to the Ruine of the Commonwealth.

Object. But Liberty for Popery and Prelacy are still excepted.

Ans. By whom? But if an exception against Popery had been put in, it is to little purpose, as long as a general Rule is laid down; for if it be a standing Rule, That Matters of Religion, and Faith, and Worship are out of the Magistrates Power; to say, that Popery is excepted, is to say, that Magistracy shall intrude into the proper Office of Christ, to restrain Popery. And when we have so much appeared against Popery and Superstition, shall we now begin to think of Indifferency and Toleration; it is a sorry exchange of a bad Religion for none. Toleration of all other Errors doth but strengthen Popery; for that thinks so well of itself, as to come in for a Child's part.

Lazarus Seaman's Sermon Sept. 25. 1644. p. 41. Besides the many loose, prophane, and scandalous Ministers, a new sort is risen up among us, who thrust themselves into the Lord's Vineyard, it is no less than Persecution, (so they commonly give out) to desire that their suspicious Opinions may be examined according to the

the Word of God ; and they commanded to forbear publishing and spreading of them ; there be many dangerous Books abroad, *Liberty of Conscience, The Bloody Tenet, The Compassionate Samaritan, John Baptist.* Matthew Newcomen's Sermon, Sept. 12. 1644. p. 31. One Opinion that will open a door to another, to Turcism, Judaism, Atheism, Polytheism, (i. e.) That every Man be left to the Liberty of his own Religion, Men will at last take up Swords and Spears, instead of Pens, and defend by Arms, what they cannot do by Arguments, Sermon, Feb. 8. 1644. p. 14.

Object. Seeing there will be difference of Opinions, how far may this be permitted ?

Answer. It is easier to tell you, wherein such differences may not be tolerated, than wherein they may ; but, I say, That as such absolute Unity must be endeavoured, tho' it may not be attained ; so an universal and absolute Liberty is not to be endeavoured, if it might be attained, nor to be tolerated or permitted, particularly such Liberty as will *ex natura rei*, produce a Rent or Schism in the Church ; nothing can be clearer than these Scriptures, 1 Cor. 1. 20. Rom. 10. 17. Gal. 5. 12. against those Doctrines that trouble and divide the Church ; this is the injunction, Rom. 14. 22. *Hast thou faith ? have it to thy self :* It is spoken of a perswasion, touching the free use of the Creatures and Days, of which says the Apostle, have it to thyself ; do not say I am perswaded of my liberty, and therefore may profess it : No, saith the Apostle, if a Man have an Opinion in *re media*, he must keep it, though it be a truth ; much more must they whose Opinions are false and erroneous ; there is scarce any difference in Judgment so small, but the divulging and propagating it may prove very dangerous, pernicious, and in the event intolerable ; who are they that divide in Judgment from all the Reformed Churches, we or the Anabaptists, we or the Separatists ? You will say, we are of the same Opinion in Fundamentals, and their Differences are in *minutioribus*.

Answer. Why then do they not follow the Apostle's Rule, and keep their Opinions to themselves, but withdraw from our Communion, and gather into separate Churches ? Their holding one Head, and one Faith doth not excuse them from breach of Unity, and downright Schism, if they hold not one Body, one Baptism. *Beza* on 1 Cor. 1. 10. Schism or Division is when we are so addicted to some Men, or outward Rites, that tho' they agree in the chief points of Religion, yet ingage themselves into Parties and

and Factions, and consider who these are. There is great fear what the Presbyterians will do, if they get the Power into their hands ; but in the mean time, who are they that brand their Brethren with the Title of proud Time-Servers, Prelatical, Tyrannical, Antichristian, what is this less than Persecution ?

James Cranford's Sermon, Feb. 8. 1645. p. 11, 12. It's commonly said in Pulpits and Presses, That a Toleration of all Consciences, even Antichristian, would be a Saveraign Remedy to cure all Dissention ; and all the Blood shed in so many Years, is charged upon the Restraint of this Licentiousness, ignorantly or maliciously termed Persecution.

I Answ. Would these Men that so hotly defend it, grant that Toleration, if they had power in their hands to punish others, which they desire for themselves ? I doubt it. The *Arrians* seemed as earnest Enemies to Persecution, yet when they had Authority on their side, raised Persecution against the Orthodox, more terrible than the Heathen Emperors against the Christians, p. 13. Would such Toleration conduce to Peace in the Commonwealth ? Let the experience of former Ages, and present Times teach this. *Tertullian* observed of Hereticks of old, they agreed well enough with one another ; for tho' they differed in private Opinions, yet they joyned in one in opposing the Truth : You persecute, says *St. Austine*, where you are able (of the *Donatists*) ; where you persecute not, you are not able to do it, restrained by Laws, or Envy of the Multitude making resistance.

Matth. Newcomen's Sermon at St. Paul's, Feb. 8. 1645. p. 12. If it be lawful for every Man to hold what he please, and this be part of the Liberty purchased by Christ, and to restrain it is in their Language Persecution, Tyranny, &c. *Paul* did very ill to charge the *Corinthians* to be of the same mind and judgment, might not they say this is to rack a low Man to the same length with a taller, and cut a tall Man to the stature of the low : Might not some say, What if I am of the Opinion, that there is no Resurrection, or that it is already past, what hath *Paul* to do with that ? Yes, saith *Paul*, if ye persist obstinate, I will deliver you up to Satan, that you may learn not to blaspheme. *Mr. Tho. Edwards's Gangrene, part 1. p. 84, &c.* I might shew how the Pastors of the Reformed Churches were against the Toleration of *Anabaptists, Libertinisme, &c.* and what they did and writ against it, as *Calvin, Zuinglius, Peter Martyr, Melancton, Zanchy, Beza, Knox, Bullinger, Musculus : As*

also the Learned Bishops and Godly Ministers in *Queen Elizabeth's* days, As *Jewel, Babington, Bilson, Cartwright, Perkins*, who says on *Rev. 2. 20.* That all Men and Women that teach Erroneous Doctrines, are to be restrained by the Government of the Church. p. 91. Did I say the Arch-Bishops, Bishops, Deans, Doctors, Court-Chaplains, and Bishops Chaplains, did hazard the loss of their preferments for withstanding a Toleration, and shall the Ministers of our Times, suffer a Toleration of all Sects to come in amongst us, when a Parliament is sitting and be silent, or oppose faintly; let us speak out and suffer no longer, a Company of giddy-headed Fellows, cunning self-seeking Sectaries to oppose the Truth of God, and to abuse and undo two Kingdoms, let us fill all Presses, cause all Pulpits to ring, and so possess the Parliament, City and Kingdom against Sects, the evil of Schism and Toleration, that we may no more hear of a Toleration or Separate Churches, in the Church of God.

Now I beseech the Reader to suppose, that some of our *London* Ministers being called to Preach before the House of Commons, should with great vehemence Preach and Press the same Arguments against Toleration, as these Eminent *Presbyterians* did above forty Years since; I would ask the Reader, are they not as true and cogent now as they were then? Do they exceed their duty in so doing on the behalf of a Church by Law Established, more than the *Presbyterians*, who urged them for a Foreign Discipline, that sought to establish it self on the ruins of the best reformed Church in *Christendom*: Or can the *Presbyterians* justly find fault with that Doctrine, which they themselves defended, or account that a Persecution, which they thought to be an indispensable Duty. Or if they had power committed to them again, would they not according to the National Covenant, endeavour the extirpation of Episcopacy, and of the Errors and Sects that still abound among us, would they not blame the Parliament for being defective in their duty, if they did not run the same pace with them in punishing Sectaries, and suppressing that Toleration, which propagates and multiplieth them; how is it they can discern a mote in their Brothers eye, if this be a beam in their own eyes. I hope therefore they have more moderation, than to condemn in others what they allow in themselves, and that they will acquiesce in their own Doctrines and declared Judgments, which would certainly be the most effectual means to

root out as well Popery, as other dangerous Errors and Schisms, which strike at the very Foundations of all Government as well Civil as Ecclesiastical, in comparison with which the greatest faults in the Established Church are in their own judgment, as well as in Mr. *Calvins*, when the Liturgy was more imperfect but tolerable in *ineptia*, of which Mr. *Calvin* gives his meaning in his 200 Epistle, *My words concerning that Liturgy are to this effect. There are many unfit things in it, if it be as you (i. e.) Knox, Whittingham, &c. present it to me, If I believed them to be real follies, I would not have judged them tolerable in the Worship of God, but I gave the Protector three Instances of such things. The First was Prayers for the Dead, at the Celebration of the Holy Communion. 2. Crism at Baptism. 3. Exstream Unction; but I was also informed by Mr. Knox and others, that in that Liturgy were prescribed the use of Wax Candles; divers Crossings in the Communion Service; That the Priests were to put the Sacrament into the Peoples mouths; Women admitted to Baptize; The Child to be thrice dipped in the water, first on the right side, then on the left, and then the face towards the Font and other Trifles, which as for the time present I thought tolerable; so I could do no less than count them unfit for such a Reformation; and I explained my self in these words (viz.) That there was not that purity that might be wished, but the imperfections which could not be amended so early might be born with for a time, there being no manifest iniquity in them. Compare Epistle 86 and 206. O that there were the like Candor and Moderation in those that Profess themselves his Disciples, as was in their Master, then should we have a more perfect agreement in those things which are now made the grounds of dissention; concerning which you may see his Opinions Collected in the Tract before mentioned, (viz.) *Calvinus Redivivus*. I have but one thing more to add concerning the Author of the Letter; That though this Author hath doomed those unfit to be tolerated, that will not declare for his Absolute Toleration, and so would expose them to the fury of all the Factions, yet he chargeth them with the guilt of persecuting others, depriving them of their Estates, maiming them with Corporal Punishments, starving and tormenting them in noisome Prisons, and in the end taking away their Lives. p. 3. But whether such cruelty may be more justly charged on the Members of the Established Church, or such as have always persecuted them with their reproaches, cruel mockings and murmurings; and when they had gotten numbers and power sufficient, deprived them of all their Livelihoods, spoiled their Goods, and at last killed,*

killed and took Possession of the Royal Revenue and Church Lands, the History of the late Wars may inform us. As to the usual Objection, that the Dissenters are persecuted only for Preaching and Praying, as they believe they are bound to do, for the saving of their own and other mens Souls; the Answer is, that Preaching and Praying are indeed necessary Duties, but what is good in it self, may become evil for want of its due circumstances; for *malum ex quolibet defectu*, if he that is not duly qualified for that solemn Office, shall publickly Exercise the Office of a Minister, without a lawful call, if he shall do it to withdraw the Flock that belongs to another Mans Fold, and draw Disciples after him, and so make Schisms and Divisions in the Church; if he shall do this in contempt of the Magistrates Authority, and the disturbance of his Government; so as his Subjects can neither live quiet or peaceable lives, for which end the Sword is put into his hands, that he may be an Avenger of them that do evil, he doth but perform a necessary duty in restraining the Disorderly, and punishing the Obstinate; which is no other then every little Conventicle doth and must do, or else it will quickly be Dissolved, as those of the *Presbyterians* were by the *Independants*, and theirs again by *Anabaptists* and *Quakers*.

I think it very pertinent to insert here the Judgment of St. Augustine in his Epistle to *Bonifacius*, which he intitles, *de Correctione Donatistarum*, wherein he asserts the power of the Magistrate to make Laws coercive in the Case of Religion.

‘1. Because those Kings that did it not under the Law are
‘condemned, and such as did it are commended. 2. Because
‘it is their Duty as Kings, for as a Man he serves God in one way
‘(i. e.) more privately, as a King another way (i. e.) in’s publick
‘Capacity, by executing with convenient rigour such Laws as
‘command things that are just, and forbidding what is contrary;
‘for what sober Man will say to Kings, *Nolite curare in regno*
‘*vestro a quod teneatur vel oppugnetur Ecclesia Domini Nostri*. It is
‘not your Duty to take care who joyns himself to the Church, or
‘who opposeth it, as if they ought not to regard the Piety of Men,
‘as well as the Chastity of Women; or it concerned them, that
‘there should be no Bastards, and not that there should be no Idolaters or Sacrilegious Persons in their Kingdoms. 3. Because King
‘may redress what others cannot, they having the Sword given
‘them to that end; and whereas the *Donatists* objected, *Cui vim*
‘*Christus intulit*, whom did Christ ever constrain, he propounds
‘the

the Case of *St. Paul* who was stricken to the Earth, in whom
 they might perceive Christ first Stricking, and then Teaching
 him; and our Lord appointed Guests to be first invited, and
 upon their refusal to be compelled to his great Supper: Where-
 fore if those that are found by the Highways among Hereticks
 and Schismatics be constrained to the Lords Vineyard, by the
 Power which the Church hath received ever since it received
 the Christian Faith; let them not find fault that they are driven
 by force, but consider whether they are driven, even to those
 Pastures where they may find true Food, and rest to their Souls.
 4. Because the *Donatists* used unjust Violence to suppress the *Catholicks*, much more might Christian Princes use their just Pow-
 er to support them, *Cur non cogeret Ecclesia perditos filios ut redirent*
si perditii filii cogerunt alios ut perirent, It is unworthy a Christian
 Emperour to deny Subjects power to destroy other Mens lives,
 and to leave them power to destroy their own and other Mens
 Souls; and when the Emperour makes Laws for falshood a-
 gainst the Truth, they that are Faithful are approved, and they
 that persevere are Crowned; and when he makes Laws for
 Truth against Falshood, those that are cruel are restrained, and
 those that are intelligent are reformed: He therefore that will
 not obey the Laws of the Emperour made against the Truth,
 obtaineth a great reward, and he that will not obey the Laws
 made for the Truth, deserves a great punishment. See Epistle 50.
 And *Contra Parmel. l. i. An privata violentia justior quam regia di-*
ligentia, is Private Violence more just than Royal Diligence, is
 it ill done by Kings to forbid Division, and not for the *Donatists*
 to divide Union; Complain if you dare, that Murther and
 Adultery ought to be punished by the Magistrate, but Sacri-
 gious Schisms ought to be permitted; If you dare act such Cruel-
 ties while the Emperour detest your Communion, what would
 you not dare if the Emperour being of your Communion should
 Authorize you. He tells them they drew all their Sufferings
 on their own heads by their wilfulness, *Si occidi malum est ipsi causa*
mali estis; and that such Sufferings were not Persecution, but Acts
 of Justice, and *Non in passione certa est justitia, sed in justitia passio est*
gloriosa, 'Tis not the punishment but the Cause that makes a Martyr.

To Conclude, I appeal to any sort of Dissenters, whether if
 they were in the same Circumstances as the Church of *England*,
 so well Etablised by Law, so graciously favoured by their Religi-
 ous Sovereigns, so quiet in their Ancient Rights which their Pre-
 de-

decessors got for them by loss of their lives, would you not think them very injurious, that because you would not admit a Minister of the Church of *England* to Preach in your Congregations, and there read the Liturgy in his Surplice, and sign Infants with the Cross in Baptism, &c. should complain against you as cruel Persecutors, and by secret devices and open opposition, endeavour your utter ruine and extirpation; and if so, why are you such partial Judges, as to condemn in others, what your Consciences tell you, you would and ought to allow in your selves. I am sure the *London* Ministers in their Letter against Toleration, p. 16. urged, That it was unreasonable that the *Independents* should desire that Toleration from *Presbyters*, which they would not give to *Presbyterians*, and I only desire the Dissenters, which part of this dilemma they will cleave to. Doth the Church of *England* require any thing in order to a Communion with her that is sinful, or doth it not? if she doth not, it will follow they are Schismatics that separate from a Church to whose Communion nothing sinful is required: If she do require sinful conditions, then those sins being the object of our hatred in others, and it being our Duty to hinder them from the Commission of it, what can follow but perpetual Strife and Contention, Wars and Confusion, and what tends to this Sedition, Privy Conspiracy and Rebellion, Heresie and Schism, Hardness of Heart, and Contempt of Gods Word and Commandments, *From all which, and an Absolute Toleration, Good Lord deliver us.*

It is strange that this confident Person should attempt at one blow, to cut off the whole power of all Christian Magistrates in Ecclesiastical Affairs, which they have always enjoyed since they became Christians, and persuade them to turn Empericks, and try his experiment of Absolute Toleration, which no Christian Magistrate ever yet adventur'd on; for as for *Holland* which is objected from the very Foundation of their Establishment, Popery was excluded; nor could the *Socinians* or *Arminians* procure a Toleration, tho' the latter were Men of great Learning and Peaceable Spirits. I suppose neither this Man, nor any of his Judgment will attempt to answer what *Hugo Grotius* of that Nation hath Written, either concerning the Power of the Supream Magistrate in matters of Religion, or concerning the Episcopal Superiority in the Government of the Church: In the mean time the Authority of *Mr. R. Baxter*, may influence many that plead for Toleration, whose Opinion I shall therefore present unto them.

Of

Of TOLERATION.

They that would pluck up the hedge of Government, as if the Vineyard could not be fruitful unless it lay waste to the pleasure of all the Beasts of the Forrest, are like the Pond that grudged at the Banks, and thought it injurious to be restrained of its Liberty, and therefore combined with the Winds to raise a Tempest, and so assault and break down the Banks in their Rage: And now where is that Peaceable Association of Waters? We feel now how those are mistaken, that thought the way for the Churches Unity, was to digg up the Banks, and to let all loose that every Man in Religion might do what he list. *Saints Rest*, p. 551, &c.

O what a Potent Instrument for *Satan* is a misguided Conscience, *ibid.* p. 133. Shall the meer pretence of Carnal Liberty be thought an Argument for a Wicked Damning Liberty, a Liberty to deceive and destroy as many as they can: *Epistle Monitory to self denial*. Will Merciful Rulers set up a Trade for Butchering Souls, and allow Men to set up a Shop of Poison for all Men to buy and take that will, yea to proclaim this Poison for Souls in Streets and Church Assemblies. It was none of the *Old Cause* that the People should have Liberty, and that Magistrates should have no power in matters of Gods Worship, Faith, and Conscience; And as it is not the *Old Cause*, so it is not the *Good Cause*. First, It contradicts the expresse Revelation of the Will of God in Holy Scripture: *Moses* as a Magistrate had to do in matters of Religion, so had the Kings of *Israel* and *Judab*; Law and Providence are both quite changed, if Toleration of False Worship and other abuses of Religion, tend not to the ruine of the *Common-Wealth*; If Magistrates must give Liberty to propagate a false Religion, then so must Parents and Masters, which would be a Crime so horrid in the Nature and Effects of it, as I am loath to name with its proper Titles; *Additions to the Preface of H. Common-Wealth*. The Magistrates would quickly find, that the Destruction of the Church will breed, and feed such Distractions in the *Common-Wealth*, as may make them wish they had quenched the Fire while it was quenckable. *Of Confirmation*. p. 309.

Of CONFORMITY.

TO the People *Conformity* is the same, if not easier, for it is the Liturgy, Ceremonies, and Ministry that most alienate them, and the Liturgy is a little amended as to them, by the change of the Translation, and some little Words, and some longer Prayers. The Ceremonies are the same, and thirty Years ago, there were many reading Ministers for one now; therefore our cause of Separation being the same as of old, I take it to be fully condemned by the Ancient *Non-Conformists*; and I have so great a Veneration for the Worthy Names and Reasonings of Mr. Cartwright, Egerton, Hildersham, Dod, &c. That I shall not think they knew not why they chose this Subject, and wrote more against Separation than the *Conformists*. Mr. Hildersham, Rogers, &c. urged the People, not only against Separation, but to come to the very beginning of the Publick Worship, and preferred it before their private Duties. p. 55. and p. 12, 13. And if the old *Conformists*, such as Bolton, &c. were alive, and used now the same Liturgy which was worse than now, and Ceremonies: I would not think their Communion in Prayer and Sacraments unlawful, or censure that Man as injurious to the Church, who should write to persuade others not to separate from them, and I profess my judgment, that our ordinary boasters that think they know more in this Controversie than the Old *Non-Conformists* did, are as far below them almost as they are below Chanier, Sadeel, Whitaker, &c. in dealing with the *Papist*. Defence. p. 89.

I daily joyn with the Parish Church in all their Worship, and Communicate in their Sacraments, and oppose Separation. The Separatists who rashly separate from some Churches, because of some Forms, Opinions or Ceremonies, which almost all Christians on earth have used in the former purer Ages, and still use should be more cautelous in Examining their Grounds. And should hardly venture to separate from any Church for that, which for the same reason would move them to separate from almost all Christians in the World, if not un-church the Church of Christ. p. 172. It is not our desire to make *Conformists* odious: Most of our Acquaintance think it their duty to do the best to keep up the Reputation of the Publick Conformable Ministry. p. 246. of his *Plea*, and p. 109. We are far from designing abatement of the Clergy, nor do we deny, or draw others to deny any due Reverence

verence or Obedience to them; I repent that I no more discouraged the peevish Spirit of Quarreling with Superiors, and Church Orders, and that I encouraged such by speaking so sharply against those things which I thought to be Church Corruptions, Admonition to *Bagshaw*. Mr. *Bagshaw* objected to Mr. *Baxter*, That he chose to Communicate in a very populous Church on *Easter-day*, purposely that it might be known, to which Mr. *Baxter* Answers, p. 76. If a man by many years forbearing all publick Prayers and Sacraments, should tempt others to think that he is against them, or thinks them needless, how should he cure that scandal but by doing that openly, pleading for that which he is supposed to be against, Ministers being bound to teach the People by Example as well as Doctrine. p. 78. The Question between *Bagshaw* and him was, Is it lawful to hold Communion with such Christan Churches as have worthy or tolerable Pastors, notwithstanding the Parochial Order, and the Ministers Conformity, and use of the Common Prayer, which Mr. *Baxter* defends by Arguments and Example. *Wo to those Ministers, that make unnecessary Divisions and Parties among the People, that so they may get themselves a name, and be cryed up by many followers. The way to prosper your Labours is to quench all Flames of Contention, study the Peace of your Congregations, keep out all occasions of Divisions, especially the Doctrine of Separation and popular Church Government, the apparent Seminary of Faction, and perpetual Contentions.* Saints Rest. p. 53.

Of CONVENTICLES.

THE Interest of the Protestant Religion in England must be kept up, by keeping up as much of Piety, Truth and Reputation, as is possible in the Parish Churches. p. 36. *Of Defence.* In Parishes where all may hear the Parish Minister, I would not have you without necessity to Preach the same hour of the day, but at some middle time, that you may not seem to vie with him for Auditors, nor to draw the People from him, but let them go to hear him, and after come and hear you. *Sacrileg. Deserion.* p. 92. Do not meet together in Opposition to the Publick Meeting, nor at the time of Publick Worship, nor yet to make a groundless Schism; or to separate from the Church whereof you are a Member, nor to destroy the Old that you may gather a New Church out of its Ruines, as long as it hath the Essentials, and there is hope of reforming of it. *Saints Rest.* p. 518. The great

Advantages that Satan hath got upon the Church, through the sin of Pastors is Division ; by this he hath promoted all the rest of his Designs ; our Division gratifieth the *Papists*, and greatly hazardeth the *Protestant Religion*, more than most of you seem to regard or believe ; it advantages Profandness, and greatly hindereth the Success of the Ministers ; it pleaseth Satan, and builds up his Kingdom. *Preface to Confession*, and *Epistle to separate Congregations*. The Hand of God is apparently gone out against the Separatist, you see you do but prepare (*Sacril. Desert*. p. 89.) Persons for a further Progress, Seekers, Ranters, Quakers, and too many professed Infidels do spring up among you, as if this were the journeys end and perfection of your revolt ; by such fearful Desertions did God formerly witness his Detestation of those that withdrew from the Unity of the Church. Parties will arise in the separated Churches, and separate again from them till they are Dissolved : I beseech you my Brethren to open their Eyes so far, as to regard experience, how few separated Churches do now exist that were in being 100 years ago. Can you name any ? And would you have all the Churches of Christ Dissolved, if you live where the Conformed Parish Minister is Faithful ? I charge you in the Name of Christ, if possible as much as in you lieth, live in Love, Familiarity and Peace with him, and do all that you can to maintain his Honour, promote his Work ; If any behind his back dishonour him, rebuke them ; if he look for some Superiority over you, deny it not ; Love him as your selves, and behind his back, say and do nothing but what is fit to testify such Love ; if you set your self in a dividing way to rejoyce at his disparagement, and draw from him as many as you can, you are but Destroyers of the Church of God. p. 91. Go as oft as you can to his Congregation, and hold Communion personally with him, and lead the People with you ; do not say, we have now Opportunity to do better, therefore it is unlawful to joyn with them that do worse, where all may hear the Parish Minister Preach, not at the same time as he doth. p. 92. Unteach the People that false conceit, that all Book-prayers are unlawful, yea, or all that is imposed. p. 98. Help to save the Religious People from being Superstitious while they cry out against Superstition. It is a high degree of Pride to hold, that almost all the *Catholic* Church is below your Communion for holding Forms. p. 104. You have made more *Papists* then you or we are like to recover. *Christian Directory*, p. 916. It is more to the Honour of the Church and Religion,

ligion, and to our Safety and Edification, to have Gods Worship performed Solemnly, Publickly, and in great Assemblies, than in a corner secretly and with a few. 2. It is a great mercy where Rulers allow the Church such Publick Worship. 3. *Cæteris paribus*, all Christians should prefer such publick Worship before private, and no private Meetings should be kept up which are opposite, or prejudicial to such publick Meetings; and therefore if such Meetings be forbidden by Lawful Rulers, they must be forborn; and it must be remembred, that Rulers that are *Infidels, Papists, Hereticks* or *Persecuters*, that restrain Church Meetings to the injury of Souls, must be distinguished from Pious Princes, that only restrain *Hereticks* and real *Sobismaticks* for the Churches good, and that times of Heresie and Schisme may make private Meetings more dangerous than quiet times. And when they do more hurt than good, and are justly forbidden, no doubt in that case, it is Duty to obey and to forbear them. p. 117. of *First Plea*, If the generality of the Ministry obtain their Liberty by some small tolerable Sin or Error, and the sounder part be few and unnecessary; in that Country Prudence bindeth them, to go to some other place that needeth them, and never to exercise their Ministry in that place, where in true reason, it is like to do more hurt than good. *H. Common-Wealth, Thesis* 240. It is necessary to the Churches peace, that no private Congregations be gathered or Anti-churches Erected, without Approbation or Toleration from the Magistrate, and that if private Assemblies be permitted unlimitedly, it will then be impossible to restrain Heresie and Impiety, yea they may meet to Plot against the Magistrate, and no Assemblies whatsoever (besides the Parish Churches) are to be allowed by the Magistrate. *Defence*. p. 21. The Interest of the *Protestant Religion* must be much kept up, by means of the Parish Ministers, and by the Doctrine and Worship there performed, and they that think and endeavour contrary to this, shall have the hearty thanks of the *Papists*. And I am perswaded that all the Arguments in *Bel-larmine*, and all other Books that ever were written, have not done so much to make *Papists* in *England*, as the multitude of Sects among our selves, *Epistle to separate Congregations*. Consider this, it is the Judgment of some, that Thousands are gone to Hell, and ten Thousands on their march thither, that in all probability had not come there, if they had not been tempted from the Parish Churches, for enjoyment of Communion in a Purer Church. 2. *Admonition to Bagshaw*. p. 78. It is lawful to hold Communion with

with our Churches having but tolerable Pastors, notwithstanding the Parochial Order, and the Ministers Conformity, and the use of the *Common-Prayer-Book*, and that we ought to do so when some special reason as from Authority, Scandal, &c. do require it.

Answer to Dr. Stillingsfleet's Letter. I have seldom heard any but well studied Sermons in the Parish Churches in *London*. And *Sacrilegious Deserion.* p. 86. He complains of the Injudicioufness of too many *Non Conformists* Preachers, and that the Injudicious are most commonly the most Confident and Self-conceited, and none so commonly give way to their ignorant Zeal, to Censure, Backbite, and reproach others, as those that know not what they talk of.

Answer to Dr. Stillingsfleet. p. 160. Mr. Baxter says, They did not meet under any colour or pretence of Religious Exercise in other manner, than according to the Liturgy and Practice of the Church of *England*, and were he able, he would accordingly read himself. And p. 205. All that can lawfully be done is done.

Of Magistrates and Ministers.

PAGE 222. of that *Plea*, Doubtless the Magistrate himself hath so much Authority in Ecclesiastical Affairs, that if he command a qualified Person to Preach the Gospel, and command the People to receive him, I see not how either of them can be allowed to disobey him. p. 140. *Way of Concord.* Pastors may in case of Forfeiture or just cause be removed, not only from particular Churches, but also from the Sacred Office, and the Magistrate is to be Judge of the Offence, p. 131. of the *First Plea*. The Church is bound to take many a man as a true Minister to them, and receive the Ordinances from him in Faith, and expectation of a blessing upon promise, who yet before God is a sinful Invader and Usurper of the Ministry, and shall be condemned for it.

Way of Concord. Part 3. p. 139. In Church Causes and Religion, the Magistrate hath the only publick judgment, whom he shall Countenance, and Maintain, or Tolerate.

Dispute of Church Government. p. 257. When a Peoples Ignorance, Faction, or Wilfulness, makes them refuse all that are truly fit to be their Pastors: Princes or Patrons may urge them to accept the best, and may possess such of the Temples and Publick Maintenance, and make it consequently become the Peoples Duty

to consent. *Christian Directory*. Part 3. p. 747. A Ministers Personal Faults do not allow a People to separate from the Worship of God; nor all Ministerial Faults, but only those that prove him or his Ministration utterly intolerable. See p. 50. to Dr. *Stillingfleet's Christian Directory*. p. 854. He that is Silenced by just Power tho' unjustly, in a Country that needeth not his Preaching, must forbear there. *Cure of Divisions*. p. 393.

The People are ready to scorne and vilifie the gravest and wisest Pastors: we are indangered by Divisions, chiefly because the self conceited part of the religious People will not be ruled by their Pastors. Where Parish bounds are judged convenient, all persons living within the Parish may be constrained to hear publick Teaching, and to Worship God in that or some other tolerated Church within their convenient reach, or Neighbourhood. *Way of Concord*, p. 139, 140, 141.

If Magistrates forbid Ministers to preach, and exercise their Office in their Dominions, they are to be obey'd; instance in *David* and *Solomon's* taking down and setting up Priests. *Thesis* 263. of the first *Common-wealth*.

If once the people be taught, that it belongs to them to govern themselves, and those the Scripture calls their Guides and Rulers, we shall have sad work, *Saints Rest*, p. 551. We are far from designing any Abasement of the Clergy, or draw others to deny due Reverence to them, *Second Plea*, p. 109. Commonly appearance, interest, and a taking tone and voice, do more with the most, than solid evidence of truth, but they who desire to have a party to follow them, and are busy in perswading others to be of their minds, and speak perverse things, are guilty of Church-divisions. The People are not Judges, who is fit to be a Minister of Christ, but the Ordainers; which is evident from Scripture-instances, of all that were ordained, and from the nature of the thing; for who is so fit to judge, as Men and Seniors of the same Office? Who but Physicians are fit to judge who is meet to be a licensed Physician? *Cure of Divisions*, p. 359.

If there be able Preachers in one part of the Parishes, and the other part have such as deliver all that is necessary to Salvation intelligibly, it is unlawful to preach against the will of the Prince or Prelates, in such a Country.

Of EPISCOPACY.

Most Christian Churches think, that though the Apostolical extraordinary Gifts, Priviledges, and Offices cease, yet Government being the ordinary part of their Work, the same Form of Government which Christ and the Holy Ghost did settle in the first Ages, though not with the same extraordinary Gift, and Adjuncts, were settled for all following Ages, *Christian Direct.* p. 832. q. 56. A Diocesan ruling all Presbyters, but leaving the Presbyters to rule the People, and consequently taking to himself the sole or chief power of Ordination, but leaving Censures and Absolution to them, except in case of Appeal to himself. I must needs say, this sort of Episcopacy is very ancient, and for many Ages of common reception: and if I lived in a place where in this Government were established, and managed for God, I would submit thereto, and live peaceably under it, and do nothing to the disturbance, disgrace, or discouragement of it.

Episcopacy is not such an Uptart thing, nor defended by such contemptible reasons, as that the Controversy is like to die with this Age; undoubtedly there will be a godly and learned Party for it, while the World endureth: and it is a numerous Party; all the *Greek Church*, the *Armenian*, *Syrian*, *Abassine*, and all others, but a few of the Reformed, *Defence* p. 65. And p. 11. If you know no godly persons of the Episcopal Way, I do; and as my acquaintance increaseth, I know more and more: and some I take to be much better than myself: I will say a greater word, that I know those of them whom I think as godly humble Ministers, as most of the Non-cons whom I know, p. 12. And I am confident most of the Ministers in *England*, would be content to yeild to such an Episcopacy, as you may find in the published Judgments of Bishop *Hall*, *Usher*, Dr. *Forbes*, *Holdsworth*, and others, *Preface to Five Disputes*, p. 9. Two sorts of Bishops Mr. *Baxter* alloweth, First, such as St. *Hierome* says were brought into the Church for a remedy against Schism: the Bishop of this Constitution, was to preside over Presbyters, and without him nothing was to be done in the Church that was of moment, N. B. S. 58. of *Church History*. (This Bishop, according to St. *Hierome*, had the sole power of Ordination.) The second is that which succeeds the Apostles in the ordinary part of Church-Government, while some senior Pastors have the Care of supervising many Churches, as the Visitors had

had in *Scotland*, and are *Episcopi Episcoporum*; and Arch-bishops having no power of the Sword, but a power to Admonish and Instruct the Pastors, and to regulate Ordinations, Synods, and all great and common Circumstances that belong to Churches, for if there be one Form of Government, in which some Pastors had such extensive Work and Power, as *Timothy*, *Titus*, and the Evangelists had as well as the Apostles, we must not change it without proof, that Christ himself would have it changed, *Ibid.* S. 60. p. 104. of *Mr. Baxter's Apology*. Many wise men think that the Presbyterians rejecting of all Episcopacy, setting up unordain'd Elders, and National Churches as headed by National Assemblies, are divisive and unwarrantable, as their making by the *Scots* Covenant a renouncing of Prelacy, to be the Test of National Concord, was also divisive, p. 72. of the *third Defence, Part the last*. My Opinion is, that *Cranmer*, *Ridly*, *Latimer*, *Hooper*, *Jewel*, *Davenant*, *Usher*, *Morton*, *Abbot*, *Hall*, *Potter*, *Charlton*, were all Pious as well as Learned Bishops.

Preface to the second Plea, We offered Archbishop *Usher's* Model, and when his Majesty would not grant us that, he prescribed the Episcopacy of *England*, as it stood, with little alteration; this we joyfully and thankfully accepted, as a hopeful means of a common Conformity and Concord. And p. 3. of his *Apology*, To these we would have yeilded, for the Churches Peace. — See more

p. 4.
In his *Premonition*, he says, he doth not dispute the lawfulness of Archbishops over Parochial Bishops, as Successors to the Apostles, and other general Officers of the first Age, in the ordinary continued parts of their Office: And some of us incline much to think, that Archbishops, that is, such as have the over sight of many Churches, with their Pastors, are lawful Successors of the Apostles in the ordinary part of their Work. See *first Plea*, p. 263, and 35.

The old Non-conformists, who thought the *English* Prelacy an unlawful Office, yet maintained the lawfulness of taking the Oath of Canonical Obedience, because they thought it was imposed by the King and the Laws.

OF LITURGY.

WE the Comission—1662, thought a Liturgy lawful, and divers Learned and Reverend Non-conformists met to consider how far it was their Duty, or lawful to Communicate with the Parish-Churches, where they lived, in the Liturgy and Sacraments: And I proved four Propositions, 1. That it is lawful to use a Form. 2. That it is lawful to joyn with some Parish-Churches in the use of the Lyrurgy. 3. That it is lawful to joyn with some Parish-Churches in the Lord's Supper. 4. That it is to some a Duty to joyn with some Parish Churches, three times in a year, in the Lord's Supper: And none of the Brethren seemed to dissent, but took the reasons to be valid. *See the Defence* p. 38. P. 76. of *Concord*, I constantly joyn with my Parish-Church in Liturgy and Sacraments, and hope so to do while I live. I take the Common-Prayer to be better incomparably than the Prayers or Sermons of many that I hear: The *Pharisees* long Liturgy was in many things worse than ours, yet Christ and his Apostles often joyned with them, and never condemn'd them. *Church Divisions*, p. 176. *Disputation the fourth of Church Government*, My Opinion is, that a Church-Liturgy is lawful, and in some parts of Publick Service necessary, and where it is not necessary, it may not only be submitted to, but desired, when the Peace of the Church requireth it. P. 359. It is not of such necessity to take the words and matter out of the Holy Scripture, but that we may joyn in a Liturgy, or use it if the words of it be not from Scripture. *Christian Directory*, p. 847.

As for the Communion-Service itself, I never rejected it because it was a Form, but have made use of it, and would do it again in the like case: He that separates on account of the unlawfulness of our Liturgy, and the badness of our Ministry, doth separate upon a reason common to almost all, or the far greatest part. *Defence* p. 54. *Plea for Peace*, p. 240. After the Plague and Fire, it was agreed that Communion with our Churches was in itself lawful and good. And p. 176. Were I in *Armenia*, &c. I would joyn in a more defective Form than ours, rather than none. And this is the Judgment of many *New England* Ministers, conform to the old Non-conformists, who did some of them read the Common-Prayer, and the most of them judged it lawful to joyn in it, or else Mr. *Hildersham*, *Rogers*, &c. would not write so earnestly

earnestly for coming to the beginning, and preferring it before all private Duties. The Defects of the Liturgy, and the Faults of those by whom we suffer, are easily heightened even beyond desert. *Defence* p. 68.

Of Kneeling at the SACRAMENT.

C*hristian Direct.* p. 616. I never yet heard any thing to prove Kneeling unlawful; there is no word of God for or against any Gesture; Christ's example cannot be proved to oblige us in this Gesture, his was not such a sitting as ours; the nature of the Ordinance is mixt: And if it be lawful to take a Pardon from the King upon our knees, I know not what can make it unlawful to take a sealed Pardon from Christ, by his Ambassador, upon our knees. And *p. 411. of the five Disputations*, As for this Ceremony of Kneeling at the Sacrament, especially since the Rubrick is inserted, which disclaims both all Bread-worship, and the Bodily Real Presence, my judgment was ever for it: God having made some Gesture necessary, and confined us to none, but left it to Humane determination, I shall submit to Magistrates in their proper work: I am not sure that Christ intended the example of himself in this as obligatory; but I am sure he hath commanded me Obedience and Peace. *Mr. Perkins* was for Kneeling, and *Mr. Baines* wrote for it, and answered Objections against it.

Of the Sign of the CROSS in Baptism.

S*ee* p. 180. *of the Plea*, and p. 418. *of his Directory*. I dare not peremptorily say, that the Cross in Baptism is unlawful, nor will I condemn Ancients or Moderns that use it, nor will I make any disturbance in the Church about it, more than my own forbearance will make.

And for Godfathers, the current consent of Historians assures us, that *Hygmus*, Bishop of *Rome*, did first ordain Godfathers at the Baptism of Infants, and he lived but forty years after *St. John*. *Preface to Infant Baptism*, *Defence of the Plea*, p. 26, 149.

Concerning Lay-elders: As far as I understand, the greatest part, if not three for one, are of this mind, That unordained Elders, wanting power to preach, and administer Sacraments, are not Officers in the Church, of God's appointment. Of this number I am one, and *Mr. Vines* was another. *Five Disputations*, p. 4.

of the Preface. Neither Scripture nor Antiquity knew any such Office as Lay-elder. *Worcester Agreement*, printed 1653.

Mr. Baxter's Judgment on the whole.

I Differ from my Brethren in many things of considerable moment, yet if I should zealously press my Judgment on others, so as to disturb the Peace of the Church, I should fear I should prove a Fire-brand in Hell, for being a Fire-brand in the Church. I charge you, if God should give me up to any Factious Church-rending Course, that you forsake me, and follow me not a step.
Epistle to Saints Rest.

A Diamond is not to be polished but by a Diamond; and I shall not presume to offer any thing to the present Parliament, but the Resolves and Reasons of a Parliament, (*viz.*) that of 1662; who were persons of so great Loyalty to the King, and Love to the Church, as to deserve to be a President to others; When the Dissenters had endeavoured with the King for a Toleration and Indulgence, they Voted *Nemine contradicente*, and presented, as their Humble Advice, *That no Indulgence be granted to the Dissenters, from the Act of Uniformity.* Their Reasons are these:

We have considered the Nature of Your Majesties Declaration from Breda, and are humbly of Opinion, That Your Majesty ought not to be pressed with it any farther,

Because it is not a promise in it-self; but only a Gracious Declaration of Your Majesties Intentions, to do what in you lay, and what a Parliament should advise Your Majesty to do; and no such Advice was ever given, or thought fit to be offered; nor could it be otherwise understood, because there were Laws of Uniformity then in being, which could not be dispensed with, but by Act of Parliament.

They who do pretend a right to that supposed promise, put the right into the hand of their Representatives, whom they chose to serve for them in this Parliament, who have passed, and Your Majesty consented to the Act of Uniformity. If any shall presume to say, that a right to the benefit of this Declaration doth still remain after this Act passed,

It tends to dissolve the very Bonds of Government, and to suppose a disability in Your Majesty and the Houses of Parliament to make a Law
contrary

contrary to any part of Your Majesties Declaration, though both Houses should advise Your Majesty to it.

We have also considered the nature of the Indulgence proposed, with reference to those consequences, which must necessarily attend it.

It will establish Schism by a Law, and make the whole Government of the Church precarious, and the Censures of it, of no moment or Consideration at all.

It will no way become the Gravity or Wisdom of a Parliament, to pass a Law at one Session for Uniformity, and at the next Session (the Reasons of Uniformity continuing still the same) to pass another Law to frustrate or weaken the Execution of it.

It will expose Your Majesty to the restless importunity of every Sect or Opinion, and of every single Person also, who shall presume to dissent from the Church of England.

It will be a cause of increasing Sects and Sectaries, whose numbers will weaken the True Protestant Profession so far, that it will at least be difficult for it, to defend it self against them: And which is yet farther Considerable, those Numbers which by being troublesome to the Government, find they can arrive to an Indulgence, will as their Numbers increase, be yet more troublesome, that so at length they may arrive to a general Toleration, which Your Majesty hath declared against; and in time some prevalent Sect, will at last contend for an Establishment, which for ought can be foreseen, may end in Popery.

It is a thing altogether without precedens, and will take away all means of Convicting Resusants, and be inconsistent with the Method and Proceedings of the Laws of England.

Lastly, It is humbly conceived, that the Indulgence propos'd will be so far from tending to the Peace of the Kingdom, that it is rather likely to occasion great disturbance. And on the contrary; That the asserting of the Laws, and the Religion Establish'd, according to the A[&] of Uniformity, is the most probable means to produce a settled Peace and Obedience throughout Your Kingdom: Because the variety of Professions in Religion, when openly divulged, doth directly distinguish Men into Parties, and withal gives them opportunity to count their Numbers; which considering the Animosities that out of a Religious Pride will be kept on foot by the several Factions, doth tend directly and inevitably to open disturbance.

Nor can Your Majesty have any Security, that the Doctrine or Worship of the several Factions, which are all governed by a several Rule, shall be consistent with the Peace of Your Kingdom.

And.

And if any Persons shall presume to disturb the Peace of the Kingdom, We do in all humility declare, That we will for ever, and in all Occasions, be ready with our utmost Endeavour and Assistance, to adhere to and serve Your Majesty according to our bounden Duty and Allegiance.

Now seeing so much hath been said by the Supream Authority of the Nation, whose Reasons are of Eternal verity, seeing so much hath been said by *Calvin* and *Grotius* and other Forreigners; seeing so much hath been said and done by the Ancient and Modern *Non-Conformists* before mentioned, I have great reason to hope, that by the Condescensions already made, and such as may hereafter be made; there will be a firm Unity between all sober *Protestants*, for the preservation of the best Established *Protestant Church* in the World, and against that absolute Toleration, which though not desired by all, yet is vigorously endeavoured by too many, who plead for no less, and which is likely to be the effect of the *Letter for Toleration*, if it be not more severely examined by such as are in Authority, whose hearts and hands, I shall still beseech Almighty God, so to direct and strengthen, that the Religion and Government may be Established, *Papery* and *Fanaticism* utterly excluded. *And that we may see our Jerusalem to be a City at Unity within it self, Peace within her Walls, and Righteousness within her Palaces, and that upon all the Glory the Lord himself will be our Defence.*

F I N I S.

